REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Initially, Applicant would like to express their appreciation to the Examiner for the detailed Official Action. Applicant would also like to thank the Examiner for considering the materials cited in the Information Disclosure Statements filed in the present application on December 3, 2003, July 30, 2004 and June 12, 2007 by the return of the signed PTO-1449 Forms attached to the above-noted Information Disclosure Statements; and the Information Disclosure Statement filed on August 10, 2007 by the return of a signed copy of the August 10, 2007 Information Disclosure Statement. Applicant notes, however, that the Examiner did not consider the materials cited in the Information Disclosure Statement filed in the present application on March 20, 2008. Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner consider these materials and acknowledge their consideration in the next Official communication.

Applicant also notes that the Examiner did not acknowledge the Applicant's Claim for Priority and receipt of the certified copy of the priority document in the Official Action. The Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner acknowledge Applicant's Claim for Priority and receipt of the certified copy of the priority document in the next Official communication.

Applicant further notes that the Examiner has not confirmed the acceptability of the filed drawings. Absent an indication to the contrary in the next Official communication, Applicant believes that the filed drawings to be acceptable.

Upon entry of the above amendment, Claims 2 - 5, 7 - 8, 10 - 11, 14 - 17, 19 - 20, 22 - 23, 26 - 29, 31 - 32, and 34 - 35 have been amended; Claims 1, 12 - 13, 24 - 25 and 36 have been cancelled; and new Claims 37 - 39 have been added. Thus, Claims 2 - 11, 14 - 23, 26 - 35 and 37 - 39 are currently pending for consideration by the Examiner. Applicant respectfully requests

reconsideration of the outstanding rejection and allowance of all of the claims pending in the application.

Claims 1 – 36 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a). In this regard, without acquiescing to the propriety of the rejection and in order to expedite allowance of the present application, Applicant has presented new independent Claims 37, 38 and 39 that are combinations of cancelled Claims 1 and 12, 13 and 24, and 25 and 36, respectively, and has amended the associated dependent claims accordingly. In view of the amendments and remarks presented herein, Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection, and requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection for at least the following reasons.

Claims 1 – 36 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over INOUE et al. (United States Patent No. 7,188,137 B2) in view of ZUCKNOVICH et al. (United States Patent No. 5,940,843). In general, INOUE discloses a system for managing advertisement data that connects advertisement provider computers, a service provider server (database) and ECR (electronic cash register) terminals to the Internet. The advertisement data is stored in the database of the server along with attributes of the target shops. The server selects the advertisement data that is to be distributed to the ECR terminals of the target shops. INOUE prints the data distributed by the server on the receipt at each ECR terminal as required.

On the other hand, according to the present invention, each job (such as a printing job) directly commanded by each client apparatus is executed on a selected processing apparatus. The client apparatus and the selected processing apparatus may belong to different groups, and even when the processing apparatus that executes a certain job belongs to a remote group different from the group of the client apparatus, the process count of the group to which the

client belongs is updated. At least these particular features are submitted to not be suggested by the combination of INOUE and ZUCKNOVICH set forth by the Examiner.

More specifically, Applicant's invention is directed toward a network system, a server apparatus, and a network management program that enables users to easily obtain calculated results such as billing information that is sorted by appropriate parameters according to their needs, in an environment where a plurality of document processing devices are accessed by a group of PCs within the network. Thus, Applicant presents three sets of claims, each being directed to a primary aspect of this invention.

Independent Claim 37, which is a combination of cancelled claims 1 and 12, is directed toward the network system. With respect to the invention in independent Claim 37, the Examiner provides INOUE, which is directed toward an advertisement management system. The Examiner first refers to the recitation relating to INOUE's Figure 1 to assert a correspondence between INOUE's ECR Terminal Devices (3) to Applicant's "processing apparatuses." Next, the Examiner refers to selected portions of INOUE's disclosure to assert a correspondence between INOUE's Advertisement Provider Computers (1) to Applicant's "client apparatuses." Applicant submits that this application of INOUE is deficient in several respects. First, Claim 37 recites that each "processing apparatus" and each "client apparatus" belong to one of a plurality of groups. Thus, there is a predefined relationship between the "processing apparatuses" and the "client apparatuses." This relationship is illustrated clearly in Applicant's Figure 1. INOUE fails to show any such predefined relationships between the ECR Terminal Devices (3) and the Advertisement Provider Computers (1).

Secondly, Claim 37 clearly recites that the browser installed on each "client apparatus" is used to specify the count condition, instruct the execution of the count process, and view the

count result. In contrast, INOUE's ECR Terminal Devices (3) clearly do not perform these functions since they are merely electronic cash registers that print advertisement data on sales receipts. The advertisement data itself is periodically transmitted from INOUE's Server Computer (2) and stored in the electronic cash registers.

Additionally, Applicants submit that the claimed functions of Applicant's "client apparatus" are not taught by ZUCHNOVICH. ZUCHNOVICH's system is designed to electronically distribute research documents over a network to investors based upon queries. These queries sometimes require a substantial processing effort to sort. Thus, ZUCHNOVICH uses an optimizer algorithm utilizing a count to provide a subset of the requested data faster than the full set of requested data could be provided. This algorithm is triggered when the count of the data reaches a given threshold. (See ZUCHNOVICH, Column 13, lines 13, through Column 14, line 14.) What is clear is that this algorithm is preset and is not controlled by a user utilizing the "client apparatus" browser to execute a specific count process based upon specified count conditions as recited in Claim 37.

Claim 37 also recites that the "client apparatus" belonging to a "normal group" can instruct the execution of a "remote process" wherein job fee information generated by "processing apparatuses" from "a group different from the normal group" is incorporated in the "normal group." The Examiner asserts that INOUE discloses these features in INOUE's Column 6, lines 5-18 and 31-67. Contrary to the Examiner's assertion, the cited portions of INOUE merely disclose that INOUE's server computer (2) maintains a database that stores advertisement conditions and store attributes, and that the ECR Terminal Devices (3) of each store records advertisement usage data and send the usage data to the server computer (2), which is used to generate a bill for the advertisement provider. INOUE's ECR Terminal Devices (3) do

not have associated "client apparatuses" to instruct the execution of a "remote process." Nor is INOUE's ECR Terminal Device in a main store capable of controlling an ECR Terminal Device from a different remote store and incorporating fee information from the remote store ECR Terminal Device into the main, i.e., "normal", store job.

Thus, for at least the reasons stated above, independent Claim 37 is submitted to be clearly patentable over the combination of INOUE and ZUCHNOVICH. Corresponding dependent claims 2 – 11 are also submitted to be patentable for at least the reasons stated above regarding independent claim 37, and further, for the additional features cited therein.

Independent Claim 38, which is a combination of cancelled claims 13 and 24, is directed toward the server apparatus. With respect to the invention in independent Claim 38, the Examiner provides INOUE, which is directed toward an advertisement management system. The Examiner asserts a correspondence between INOUE's server computer (2), ECR Terminal Devices (3) and Advertisement Provider Computers (1) to Applicant's "server apparatus," "processing apparatuses" and "client apparatuses." This application of INOUE is deficient is several respects. First, Claim 38 recites that each "processing apparatus" and each "client apparatus" belong to one of a plurality of groups. Thus, there is a predefined relationship between the "processing apparatuses" and the "client apparatuses." This relationship is illustrated clearly in Applicant's Figure 1. INOUE fails to show any such predefined relationships between the ECR Terminal Devices (3) and the Advertisement Provider Computers (1).

Secondly, Claim 38 clearly recites that the browser installed on each "client apparatus" is used to specify the count condition, instruct the execution of the count process, and view the count result. In contrast, INOUE's ECR Terminal Devices (3) clearly do not perform these

functions since they are really electronic cash registers that print advertisement data on sales receipts. The advertisement data itself is periodically transmitted from INOUE's Server Computer (2) and stored in the electronic cash registers.

The Examiner acknowledges that INOUE's server computer fails to disclose a "count processor that executes a count process according to a count condition specified by each of said client apparatuses, based on the job data." However, the Examiner asserts that ZUCKNOVICH teaches this feature. Contrary to the Examiner's assertion, ZUCHNOVICH does not teach the claimed functions of Applicant's "count processor." ZUCHNOVICH's system is designed to electronically distribute research documents over a network to investors based upon queries. These queries sometimes require a substantial processing effort to sort. Thus, ZUCHNOVICH uses an optimizer algorithm utilizing a count to provide a subset of the requested data faster than the full set of requested data could be provided. This algorithm is triggered when the count of the data reaches a given threshold. (See ZUCHNOVICH, Column 13, lines 13, through Column 14, line 14.) What is clear is that this algorithm is preset and is not controlled by a user utilizing "client apparatus" browsers to execute a specific count processes based upon specified count conditions as recited in Claim 38.

Claim 38 also recites that the "client apparatus" belonging to a "normal group" can instruct the execution of a "remote process" wherein job fee information generated by "processing apparatuses" from "a group different from the normal group" is incorporated in the "normal group." The Examiner asserts that INOUE discloses these features in INOUE's Column 6, lines 5-18 and 31-67. Contrary to the Examiner's assertion, the cited portions of INOUE merely disclose that INOUE's server computer (2) maintains a database that stores advertisement conditions and store attributes, and that the ECR Terminal Devices (3) of each store records

advertisement usage data and send the usage data to the server computer (2), which is used to generate a bill for the advertisement provider. INOUE's ECR Terminal Devices (3) do not have associated "client apparatuses" to instruct the execution of a "remote process." Nor is INOUE's ECR Terminal Device in a main store capable of controlling an ECR Terminal Device from a different remote store and incorporating fee information from the remote store ECR Terminal Device into the main, i.e., "normal", store job.

Thus, for at least the reasons stated above, independent Claim 38 is submitted to be clearly patentable over the combination of INOUE and ZUCHNOVICH. Corresponding dependent claims 14 – 23 are also submitted to be patentable for at least the reasons stated above regarding independent claim 38, and further, for the additional features cited therein.

Independent Claim 39, which is a combination of cancelled claims 25 and 36, is directed toward the network management program. With respect to the invention in independent Claim 39, the Examiner provides INOUE, which is directed toward an advertisement management system and associated management program. The Examiner asserts a correspondence between INOUE's server computer (2), ECR Terminal Devices (3) and Advertisement Provider Computers (1) to Applicant's "server apparatus," "processing apparatuses" and "client apparatuses." This application of INOUE is deficient is several respects. First, Claim 39 recites that each "processing apparatus" and each "client apparatus" belong to one of a plurality of groups. Thus, there is a predefined relationship between the "processing apparatuses" and the "client apparatuses." This relationship is illustrated clearly in Applicant's Figure 1. INOUE fails to show any such predefined relationships between the ECR Terminal Devices (3) and the Advertisement Provider Computers (1).

Secondly, Claim 39 clearly recites that the browser installed on each "client apparatus" is used to specify the count condition, instruct the execution of the count process, and view the count result. In contrast, INOUE's ECR Terminal Devices (3) clearly do not perform these functions since they are merely electronic cash registers that print advertisement data on sales receipts. The advertisement data itself is periodically transmitted from INOUE's Server Computer (2) and stored in the electronic cash registers.

The Examiner acknowledges that INOUE's server computer fails to disclose the "executing a count process according to a count condition specified by each of said client apparatuses, based on the job data." However, the Examiner asserts that ZUCKNOVICH teaches this feature. Contrary to the Examiner's assertion, ZUCHNOVICH does not teach the claimed functions of Applicant's "count process." ZUCHNOVICH's system is designed to electronically distribute research documents over a network to investors based upon queries. These queries sometimes require a substantial processing effort to sort. Thus, ZUCHNOVICH uses an optimizer algorithm utilizing a count to provide a subset of the requested data faster than the full set of requested data could be provided. This algorithm is triggered when the count of the data reaches a given threshold. (See ZUCHNOVICH, Column 13, lines 13, through Column 14, line 14.) What is clear is that this algorithm is preset and is not controlled by a user utilizing "client apparatus" browsers to execute a specific count processes based upon specified count conditions as recited in Claim 39.

Claim 39 also recites that the "client apparatus" belonging to a "normal group" can instruct the execution of a "remote process" wherein job fee information generated by "processing apparatuses" from "a group different from a normal group" is incorporated in the "normal group." The Examiner asserts that INOUE discloses these features in INOUE's Column

6, lines 5-18 and 31-67. Contrary to the Examiner's assertion, the cited portions of INOUE merely disclose that INOUE's server computer (2) maintains a database that stores advertisement conditions and store attributes, and that the ECR Terminal Devices (3) of each store records advertisement usage data and send the usage data to the server computer (2), which is used to generate a bill for the advertisement provider. INOUE's ECR Terminal Devices (3) do not have associated "client apparatuses" to instruct the execution of a "remote process." Nor is INOUE's ECR Terminal Device in a main store capable of controlling an ECR Terminal Device from a different remote store and incorporating fee information from the remote store ECR Terminal Device into the main, i.e., "normal", store job.

Thus, for at least the reasons stated above, independent Claim 39 is submitted to be clearly patentable over the combination of INOUE and ZUCHNOVICH. Corresponding dependent claims 26 – 35 are also submitted to be patentable for at least the reasons stated above regarding independent claim 39, and further, for the additional features cited therein.
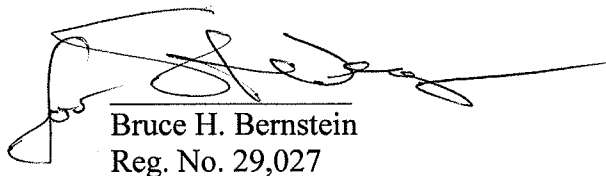
SUMMARY

From the amendments, arguments and remarks provided above, Applicant submits that all of the pending claims in the present application are patentable over the references cited by the Examiner, either alone or in combination. Accordingly, reconsideration of the outstanding Official Action is respectfully requested and an indication of the allowance of Claims 2 – 11, 14 – 23, 26 – 35, and 37 – 39 is now believed to be appropriate.

Applicant notes that this amendment is being made to advance prosecution of the application to allowance, and should not be considered as surrendering equivalents of the territory between the claims prior to the present amendment and the amended claims. Further, no acquiescence as to the propriety of the Examiner's rejections is made by the present amendment. All other amendments to the claims which have been made by this amendment, and which have not been specifically noted to overcome a rejection bases upon the prior art, should be considered to have been made for a purpose unrelated to patentability, and no estoppel should be deemed to attach thereto.

Should there be any questions, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully Submitted,
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